

RRS 18 MARK-ROOM

RRS 18 – Mark Room

To clearly understand the implications of each word used in the rule, ensure that you review the prelude of section C “*At Marks and Obstructions*” and the definition in the preface of the Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) for the following words.

Control click to connect to the link

<https://d7qh6ksdplczd.cloudfront.net/sailing/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/29083752/2025-2028-RRS-with-Changes-and-Corrections.pdf>

- Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap
- Port / Starboard
- Leeward and Windward
- Keep Clear
- Zone
- Mark-Room
- Room

RRS 18.1 - When Rule 18 Applies

(a) Rule 18 applies between boats when they are required to leave a mark on the same side and at least one of them is in the zone.

However, it does not apply

- (1) between boats on opposite tacks on a beat to windward,
 - (2) between boats on opposite tacks when the proper course at the mark for one but not both of them is to tack,
 - (3) between a boat approaching a mark and one leaving it, or
 - (4) if the mark is a continuing obstruction, in which case rule 19 applies.
- (b) Rule 18 no longer applies between boats when mark-room has been given.

RRS - 18.2 Giving Mark-Room

(The first test!)

- (a) When the first of two boats reaches the zone,
 - (1) if the boats are overlapped, the outside boat at that moment shall give the inside boat mark-room;
 - (2) if the boats are not overlapped, the boat that has not reached the zone at that moment shall give the other boat mark-room.

RRS 18.2 – Giving Mark-Room *(The continuing commitment)*

When a boat is required to give mark-room by this rule, she shall continue to do so for as long as this rule applies, even if later an overlap is broken or a new overlap begins.

(b) Rule 18.2(a) no longer applies if the boat entitled to mark-room passes head to wind or leaves the zone.

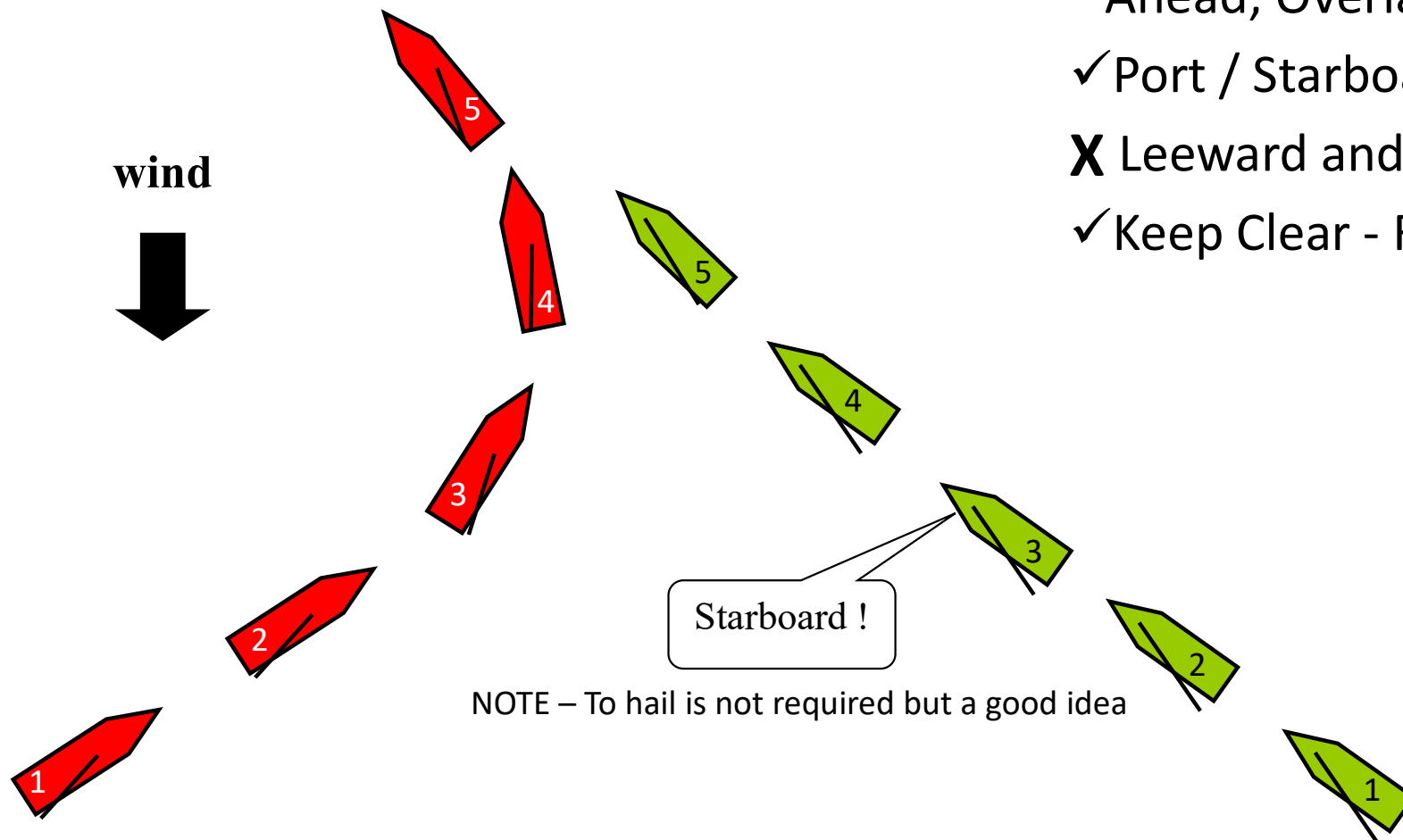
(c) When rule 18.2(a) does not apply and the boats are overlapped, the outside boat shall give the inside boat mark-room.

(d) If a boat obtained an inside overlap from clear astern or by tacking to windward of the other boat and, from the time the overlap began, the outside boat has been unable to give markroom, rules 18.2(a) and 18.2(c) do not apply between them.

(e) If there is reasonable doubt that a boat obtained or broke an overlap in time, it shall be presumed that she did not.

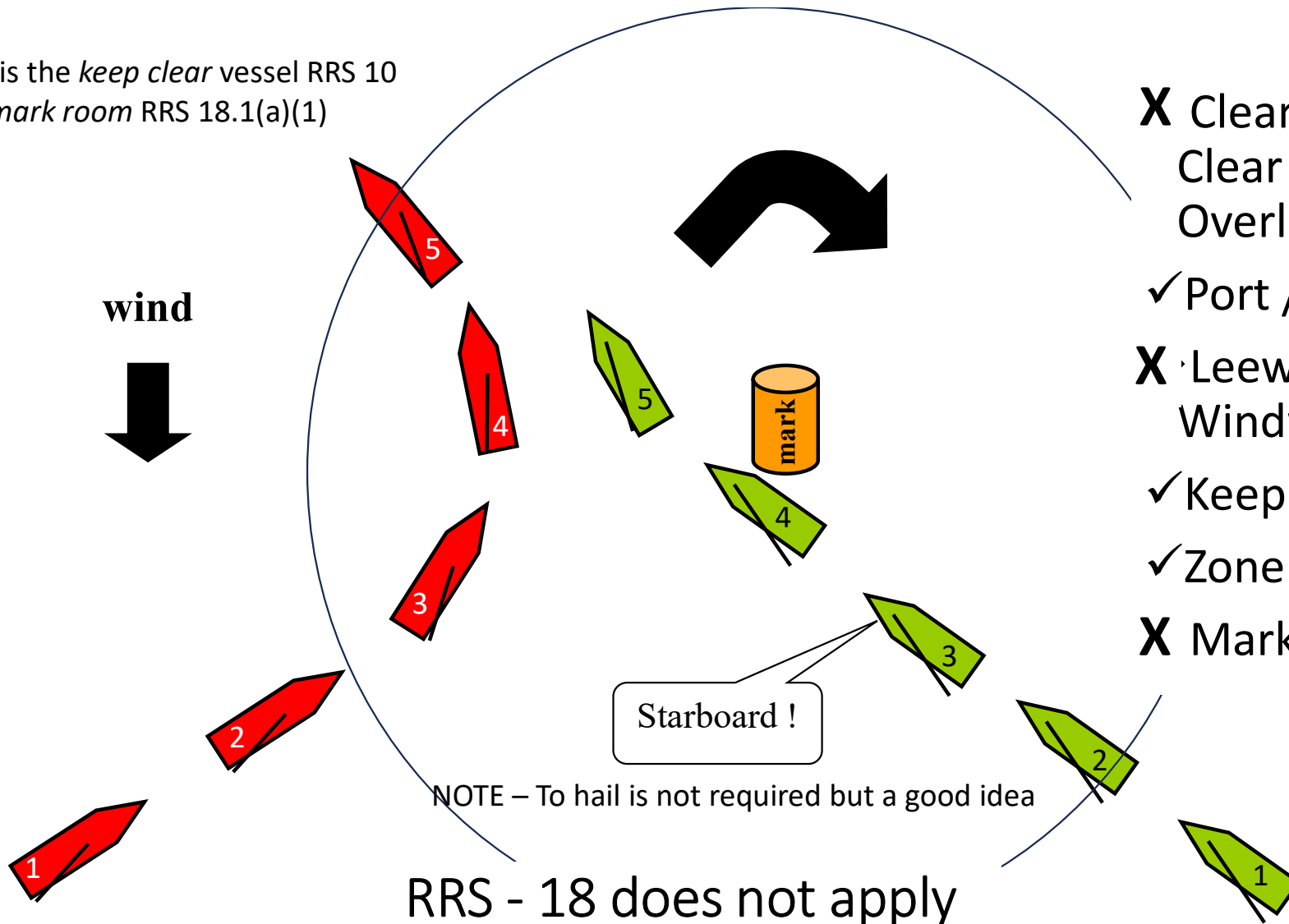
(At the Windward Mark)

*(The Second Test
Port / Starboard)*



- X** Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap
- ✓ Port / Starboard
- X** Leeward and Windward
- ✓ Keep Clear - Red

Red is the *keep clear* vessel RRS 10
No *mark room* RRS 18.1(a)(1)



X Clear Astern and
Clear Ahead;
Overlap

✓ Port / Starboard

X Leeward and
Windward

✓ Keep Clear –Red

✓ Zone

X Mark Room

NOTE – To hail is not required but a good idea

RRS - 18 does not apply

X Clear Astern and
Clear Ahead;
Overlap

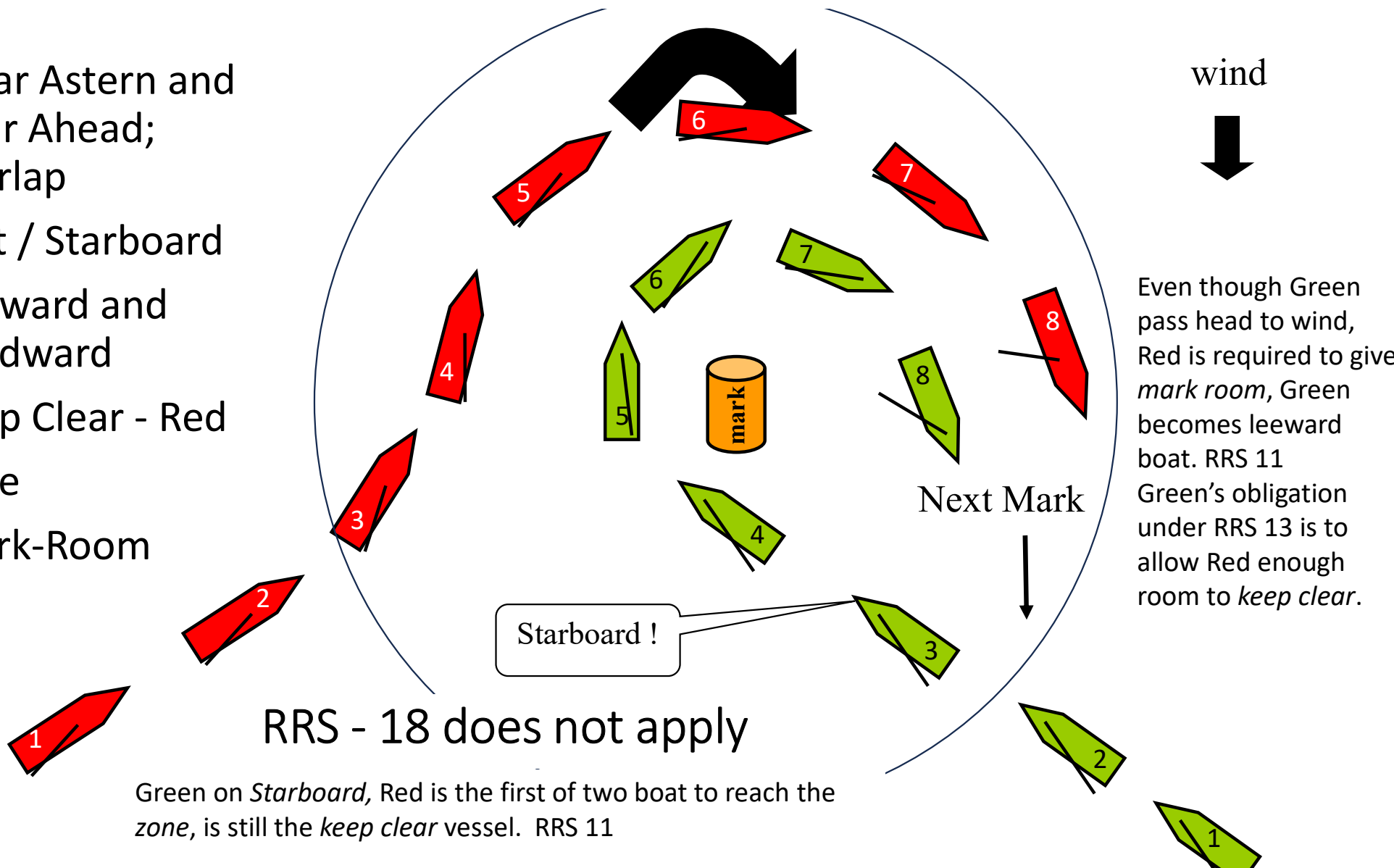
✓ Port / Starboard

X Leeward and
Windward

✓ Keep Clear - Red

✓ Zone

X Mark-Room



X Clear Astern and
Clear Ahead; Overlap

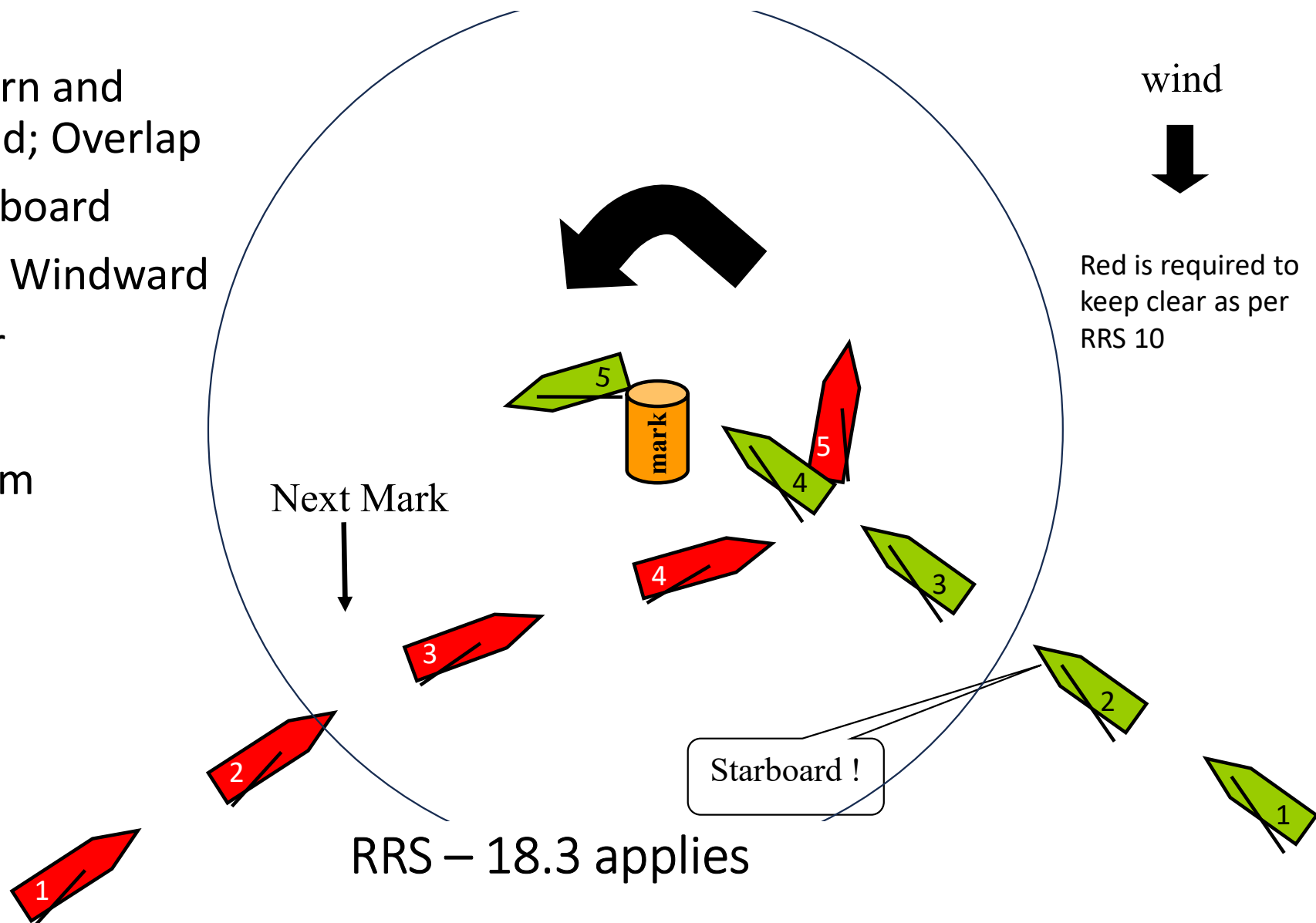
✓ Port / Starboard

X Leeward / Windward

✓ Keep Clear

✓ Zone

X Mark-Room



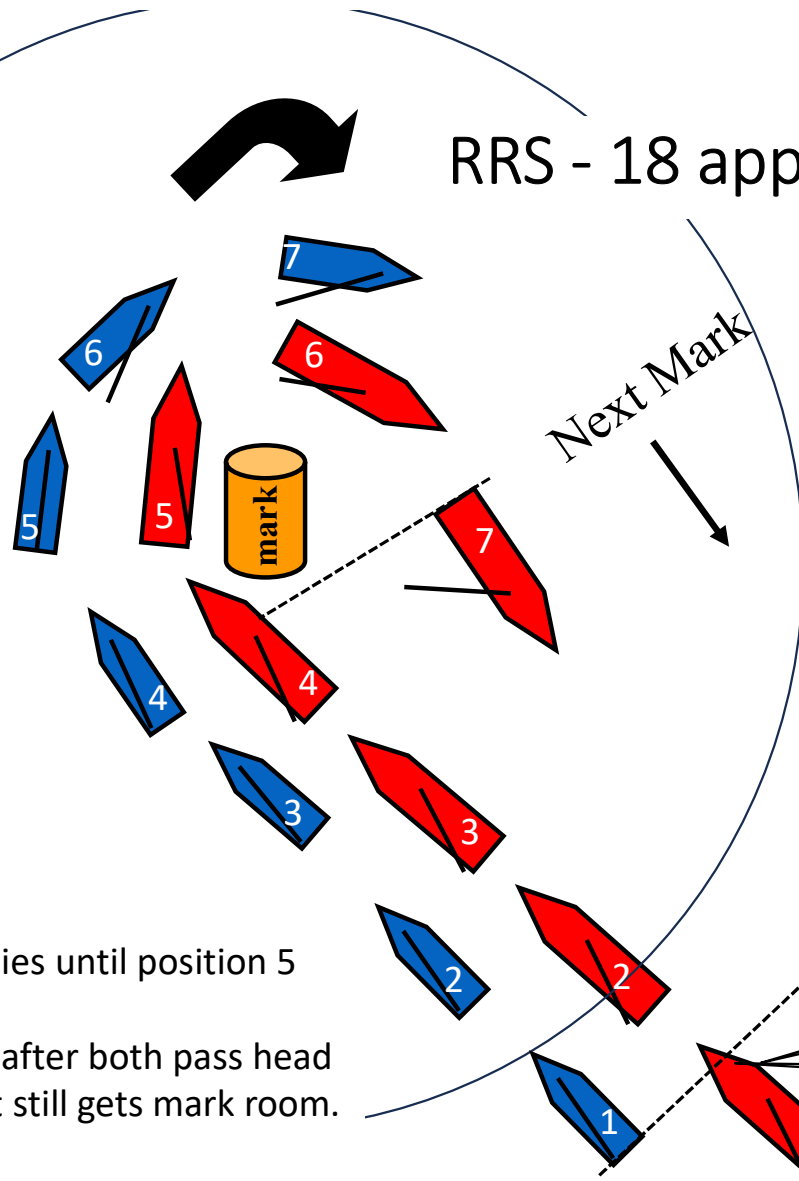
wind



Red is required to *keep clear* as per RRS 10 however an *overlap* was established as the first vessel reached the *zone* therefore RRS 18.2(a)(1) applies. Blue is required to give Red *mark room*.

RRS - 18.2(a)(1) applies until position 5 then, RRS 18.2.(c) Applies after both pass head to wind. Inside boat still gets mark room.

RRS - 18 applies



✓ Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap

✗ Port / Starboard

✓ Leeward and Windward

✓ Keep Clear - Red

✓ Zone

✓ Mark-Room - Red

Overlap

Room!

wind



NOTE – At position #3.
Red's *proper course* is
to sail close to the
Mark therefore she
does not break RRS 17
if she was to luff Red
above the *Mark*.
Beware Red!

✓ Clear Astern and Clear
Ahead; Overlap

✗ Port / Starboard

✓ Leeward and Windward

✓ Keep Clear - Red

✓ Zone

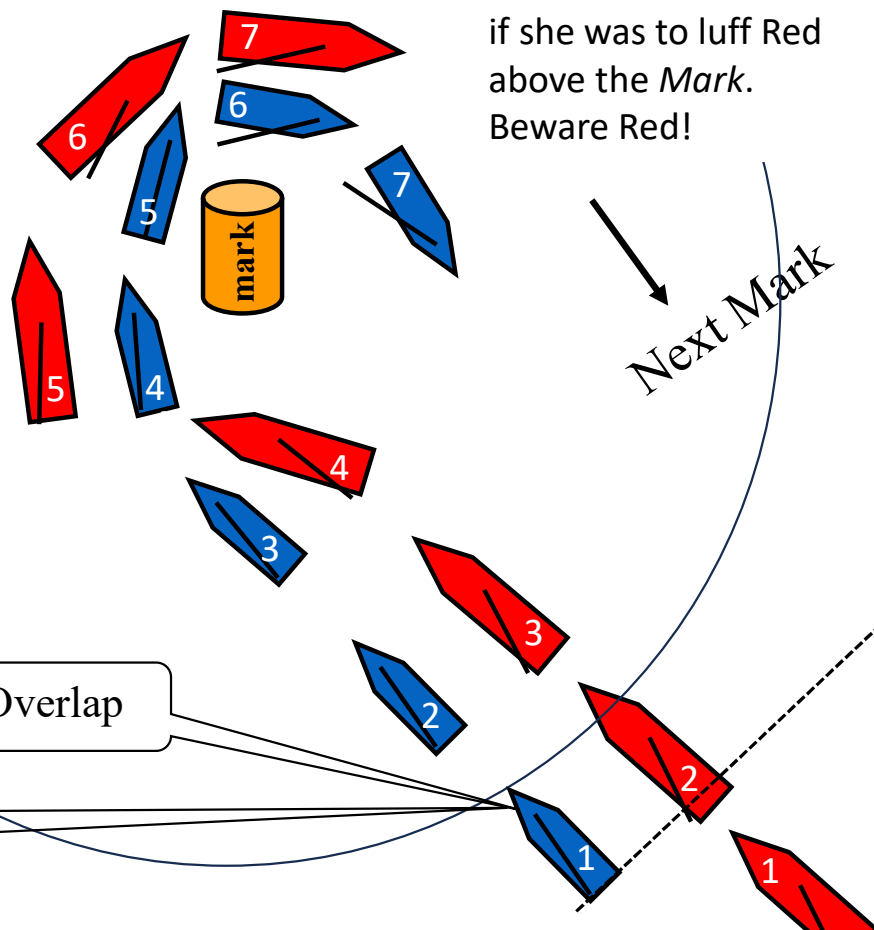
✓ Mark-Room – Not for
Red

Next Mark

No Overlap

No Room!

RRS - 18.2(a)(1) applies until position 5
then
RRS 18.2.(c) Applies after both vessels
pass head to wind.
Inside boat still gets mark room.



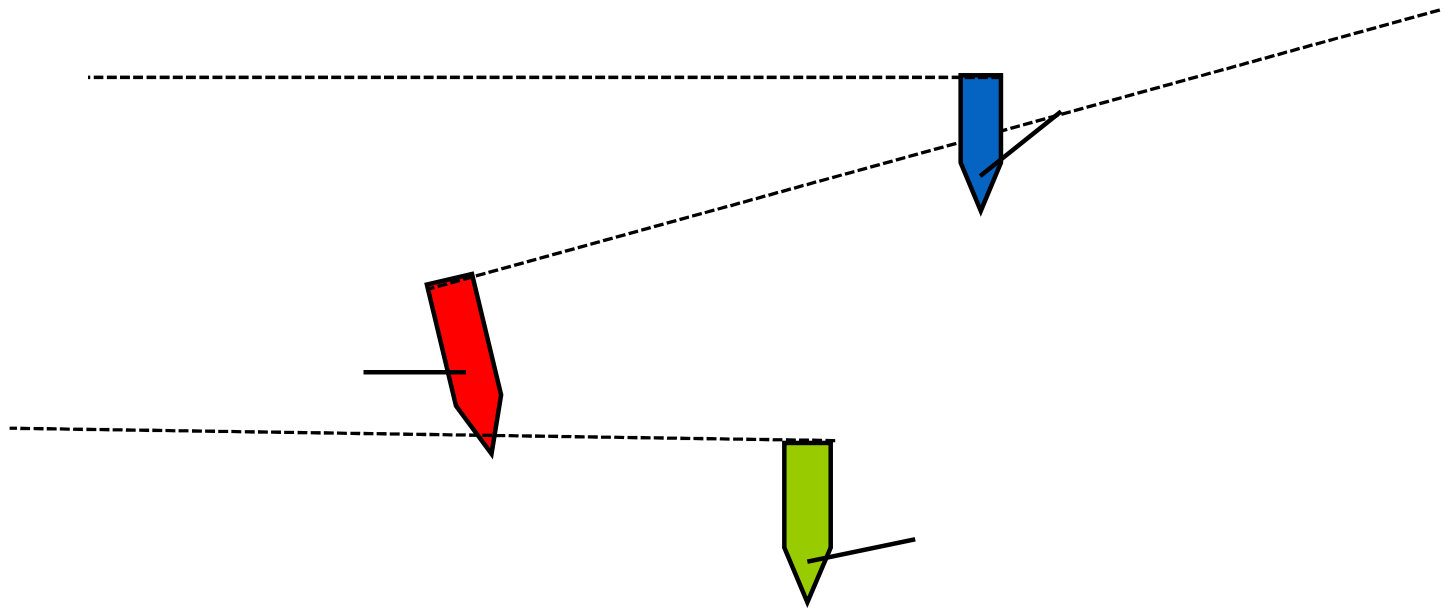
(Approaching the Leeward Mark

(The First Test !

“Are Overlapped” or “Are Not-overlap”)

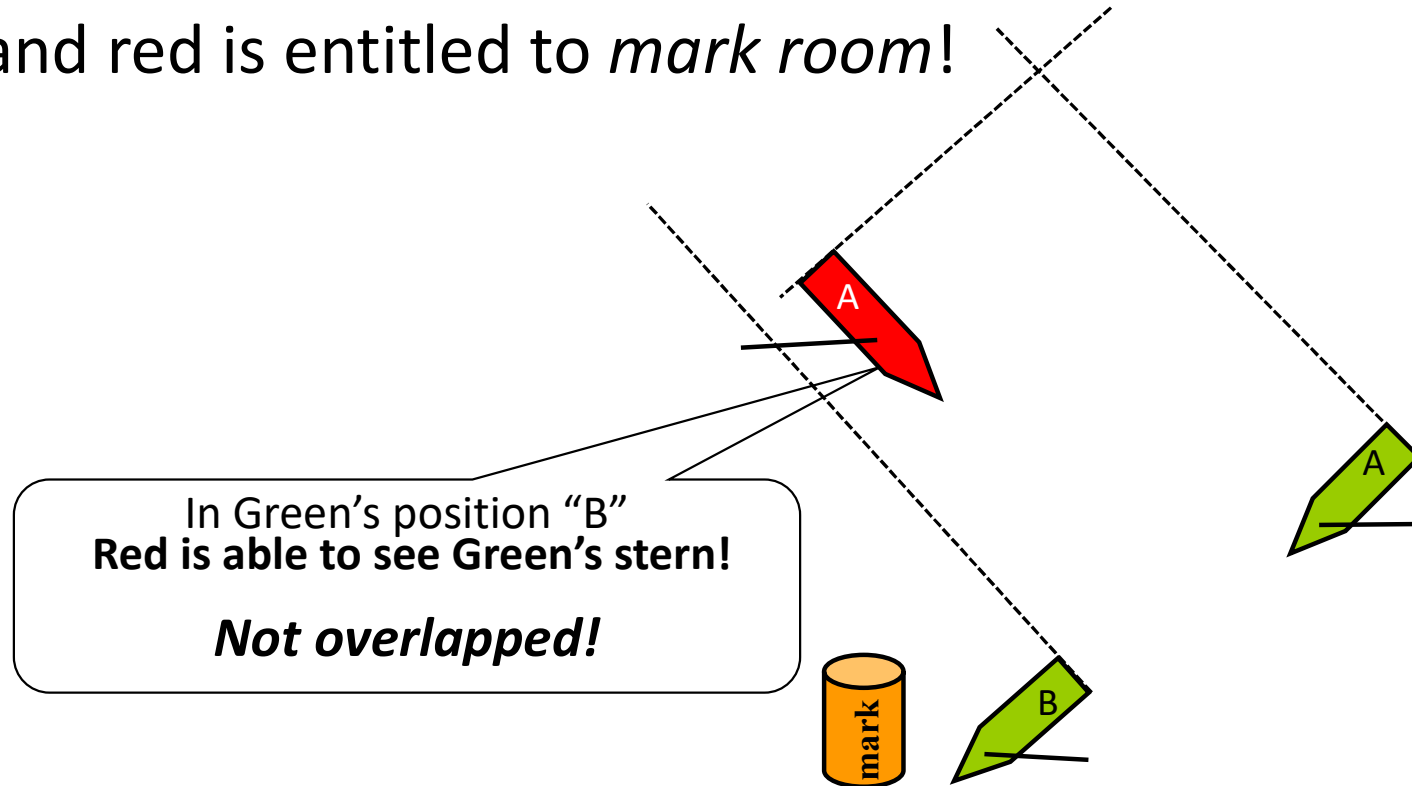
Are Overlapped:

Note - Vessels courses are essentially parallel.
Easier to determine when overlapped.



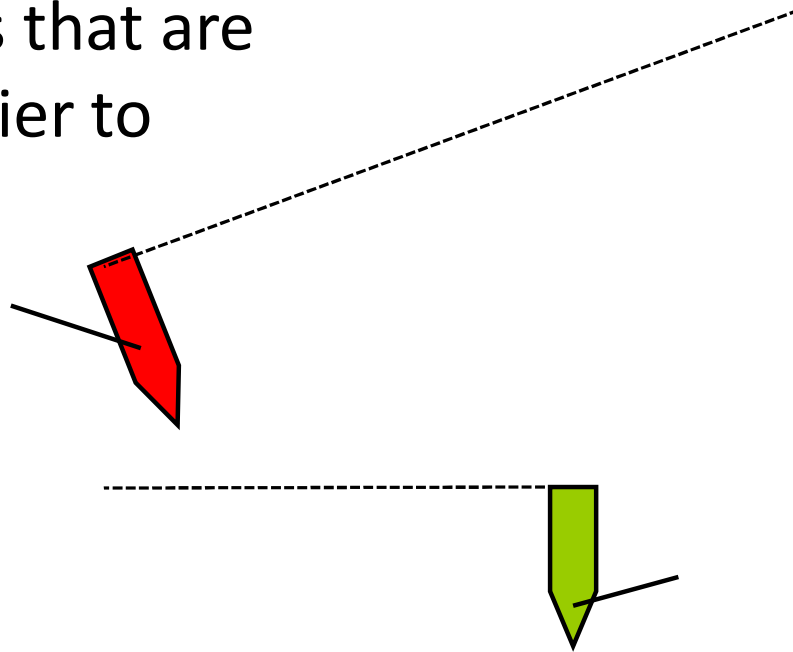
#2 – Are Overlapped:

Downwind vessels are on opposite *tacks* and even though Green appears to be *clear ahead* in position “A” as their courses are substantially different however, an *overlap* exists and red is entitled to *mark room*!



#3 – Not *Overlapped*:

Downwind vessels courses that are essentially parallel are easier to determine *overlap*.



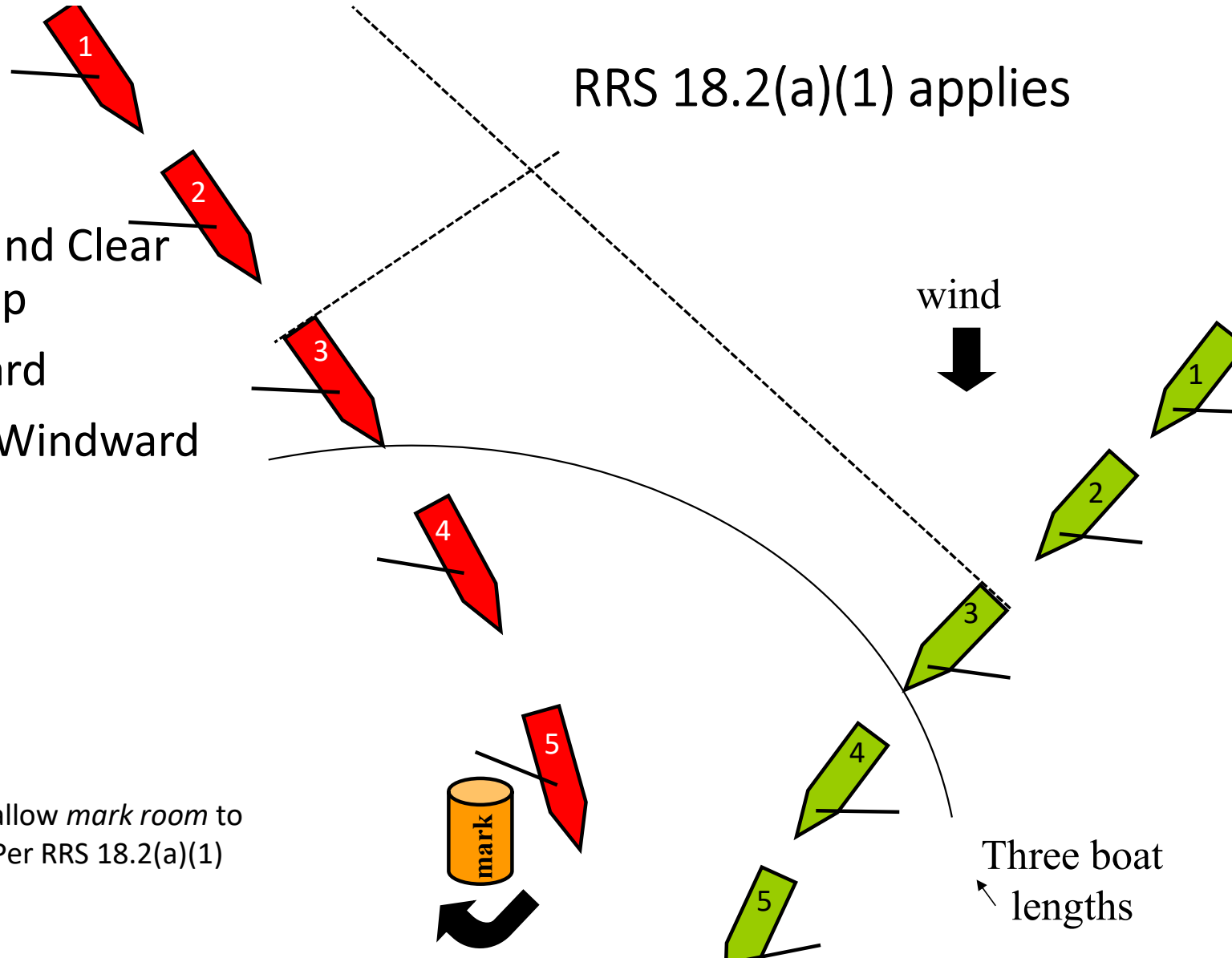
NOTE – Red bowman should easily see all of Green's stern.

RRS 18.2(a)(1) applies

- ✓ Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap
- ✓ Port / Starboard
- ✗ Leeward and Windward
- ✓ Keep Clear
- ✓ Zone
- ✓ Mark-Room

Red is the *keep clear* vessel.

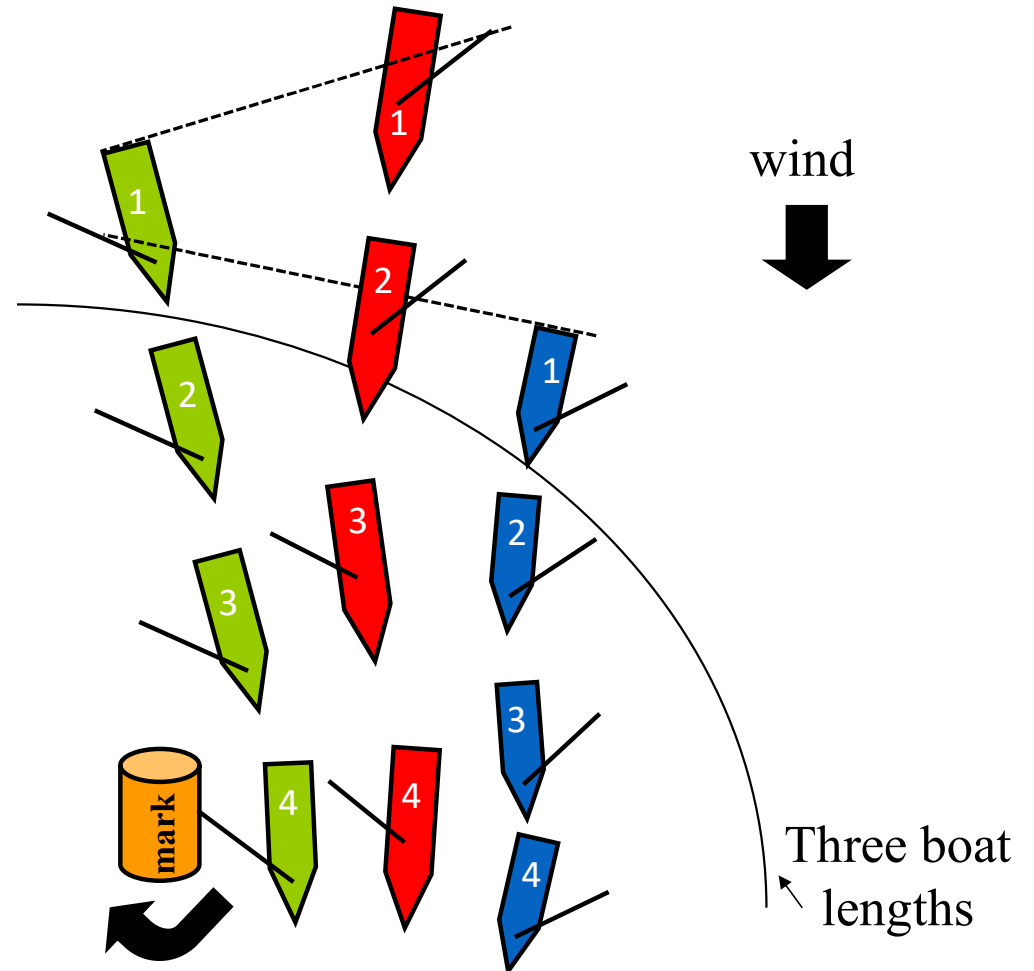
Greens rights are restricted to allow *mark room* to an inside *overlapped* vessel as Per RRS 18.2(a)(1)



- ✓ Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap
- ✓ Port / Starboard
- ✓ Leeward / Windward
- ✓ Keep Clear
- ✓ Zone
- ✓ Mark-Room

Blue is overlapped with Green who is overlapped with Red therefore these three vessels are overlapped. Blue is the *right of way* vessel however blue is restricted by RRS 18.2(a)(1) and required to give all overlapped boats *mark room* sufficient to maneuver in a seamanlike manner.

RRS - 18.2(a)(1) applies



RRS - 18.2(a)(2) applies

X Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap

✓ Port / Starboard

X Leeward and Windward

✓ Keep Clear

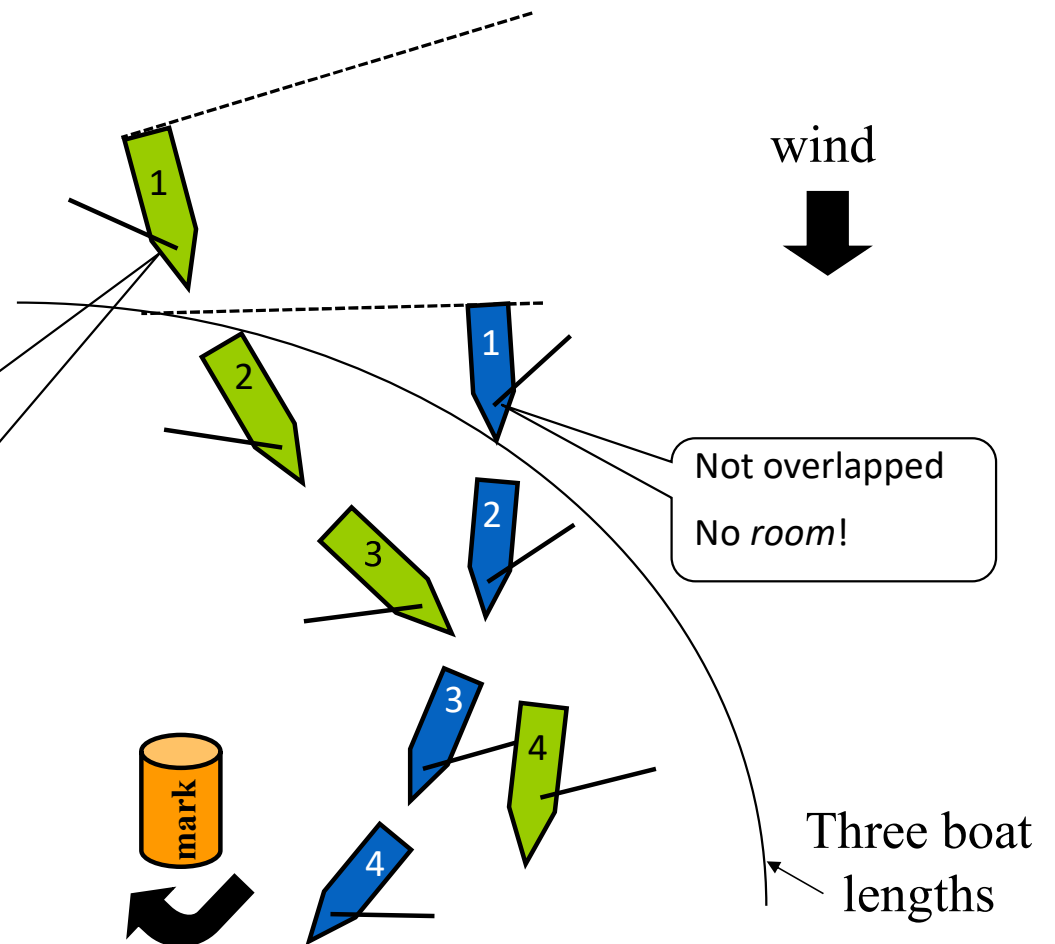
✓ Zone

X Mark-Room

Green is entering the *zone* behind Blue.
Not overlapped

Hint! - Green is able to see Blue's stern.

Blue hailed no overlap.
No *room* is owed.
Green is required to *keep clear* and give Blue *room*.



Leeward Mark – Starboard Rounding

✓ Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap

✓ Port / Starboard

✗ Leeward and Windward

✓ Keep Clear

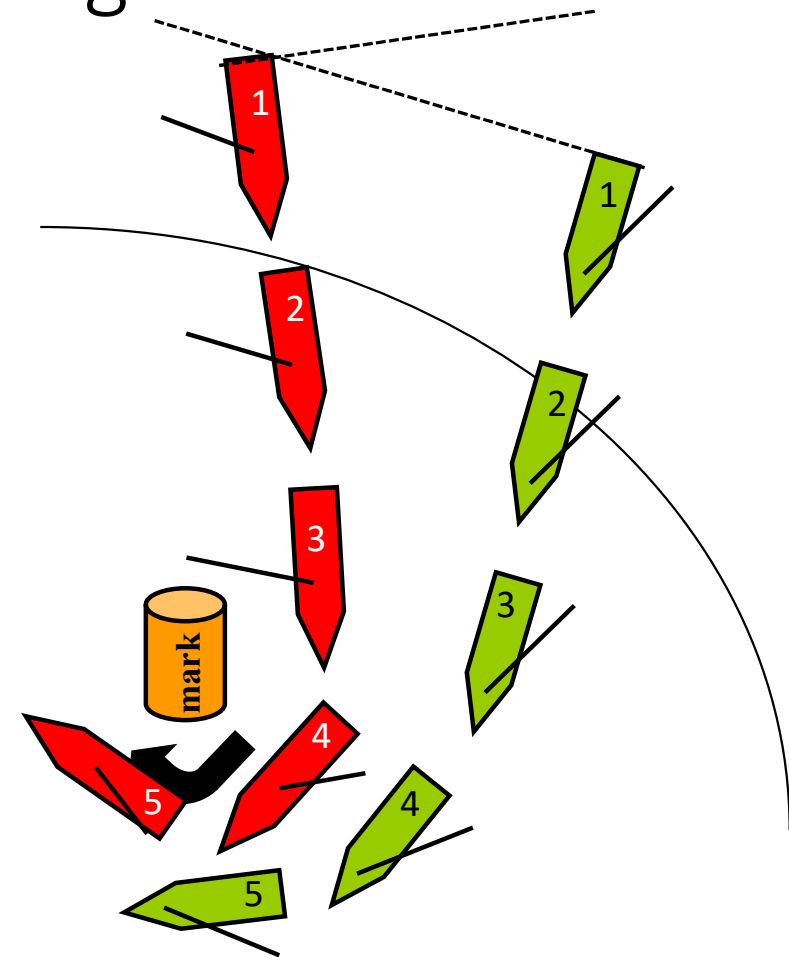
✓ Zone

✓ Mark-Room

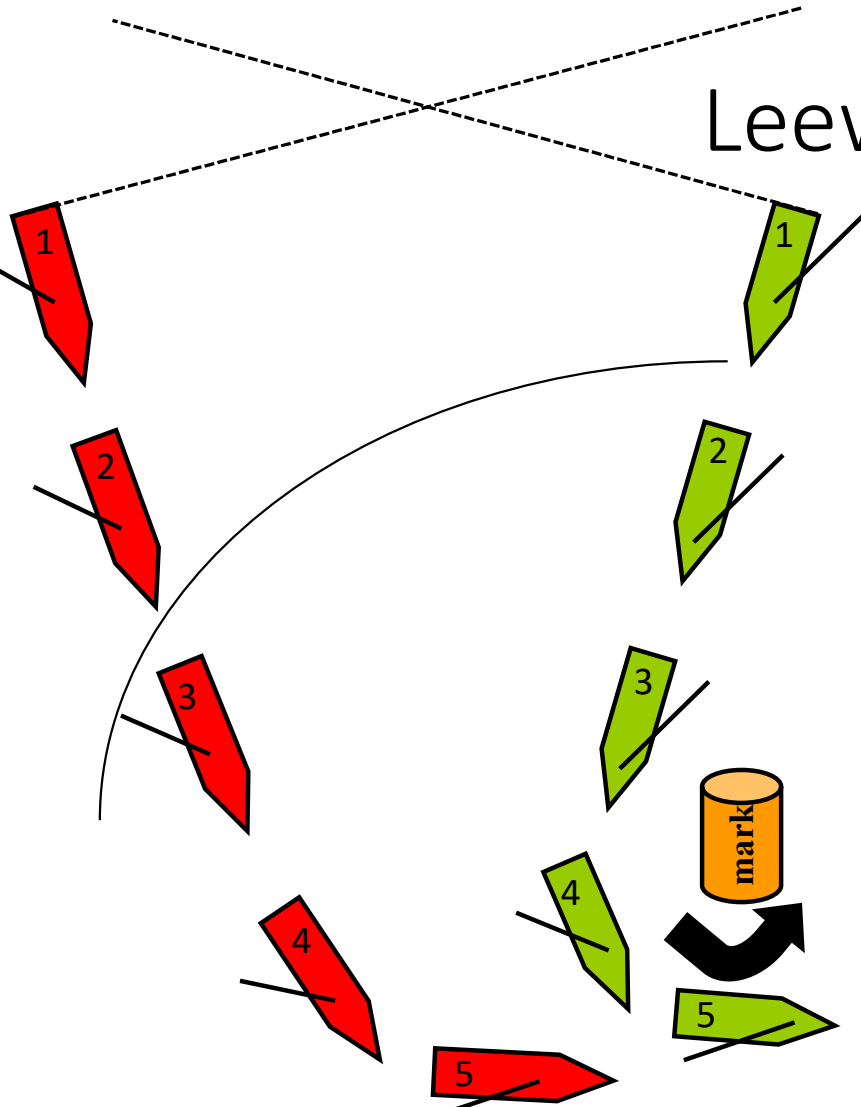
Red is the *keep clear* vessel.

Greens rights are restricted to allow *mark room* to an inside *overlapped* vessel as Per RRS 18.2(a)(1)

wind
↓



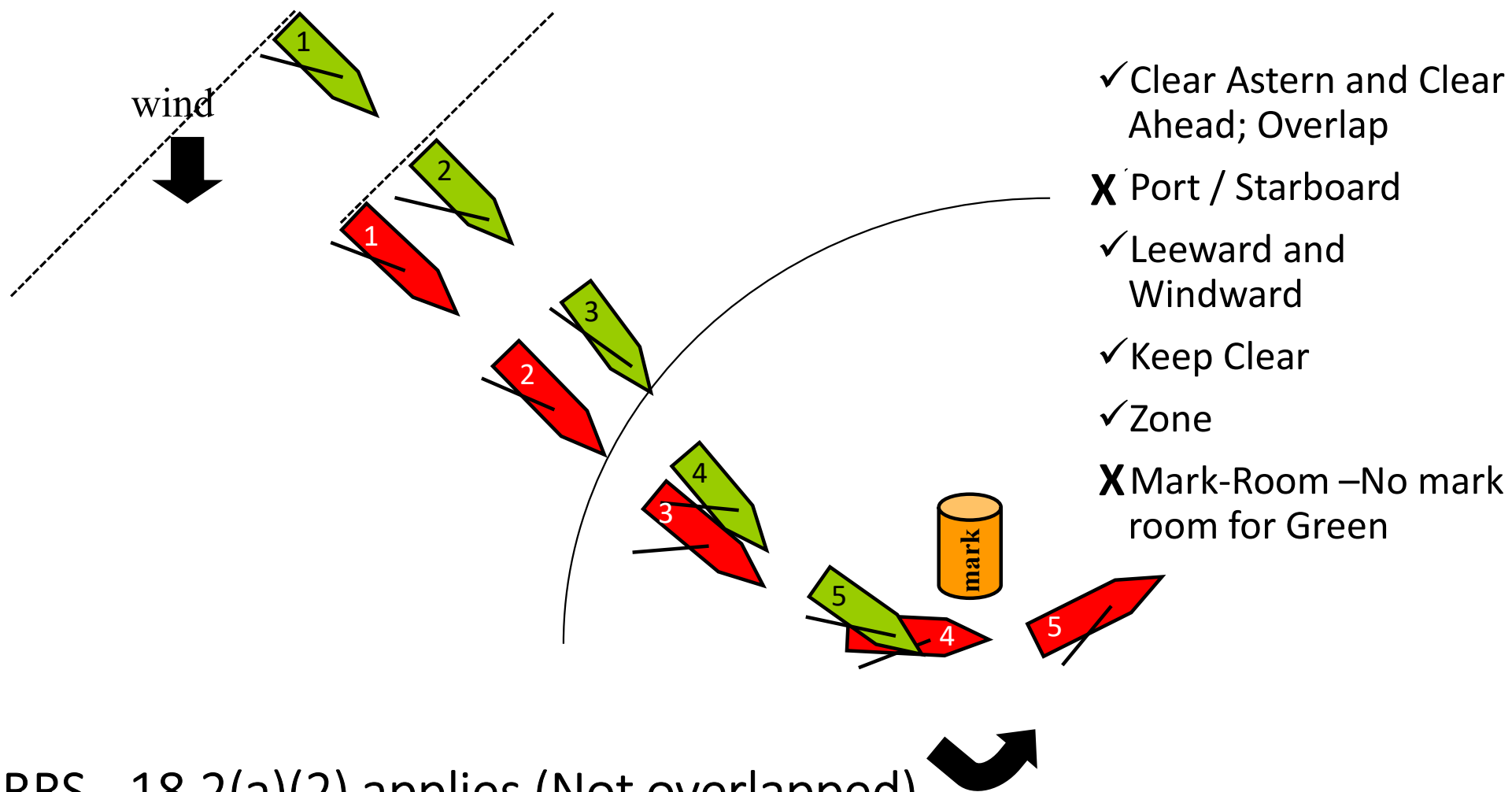
Leeward Mark – Port Rounding



- ✓ Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap
- ✓ Port / Starboard
- X** Leeward and Windward
- ✓ Keep Clear
- ✓ Zone
- ✓ Mark-Room

Green is the Right of Way vessel. RRS 10

Green's restrictions are RRS 16.1 and RRS 18.4



RRS - 18.2(a)(2) applies (Not overlapped)

Not overlapped therefore Green is not entitled to “*mark room*”

Approaching the Windward Mark

RRS - 18.3 Tacking in the Zone

If a boat passes head to wind from port to starboard tack in the zone of a mark to be left to port, rule 18.2 does not apply between her and another boat on starboard tack that is fetching the mark. If the other boat has been on starboard tack since entering the zone, the boat that passed head to wind

(a) shall not cause the other boat to sail above close-hauled to avoid contact, and

(b) shall give mark-room if the other boat becomes overlapped inside her.

RRS - 18.3 applies
RRS 18.2 does not apply

X Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap

✓ Port / Starboard

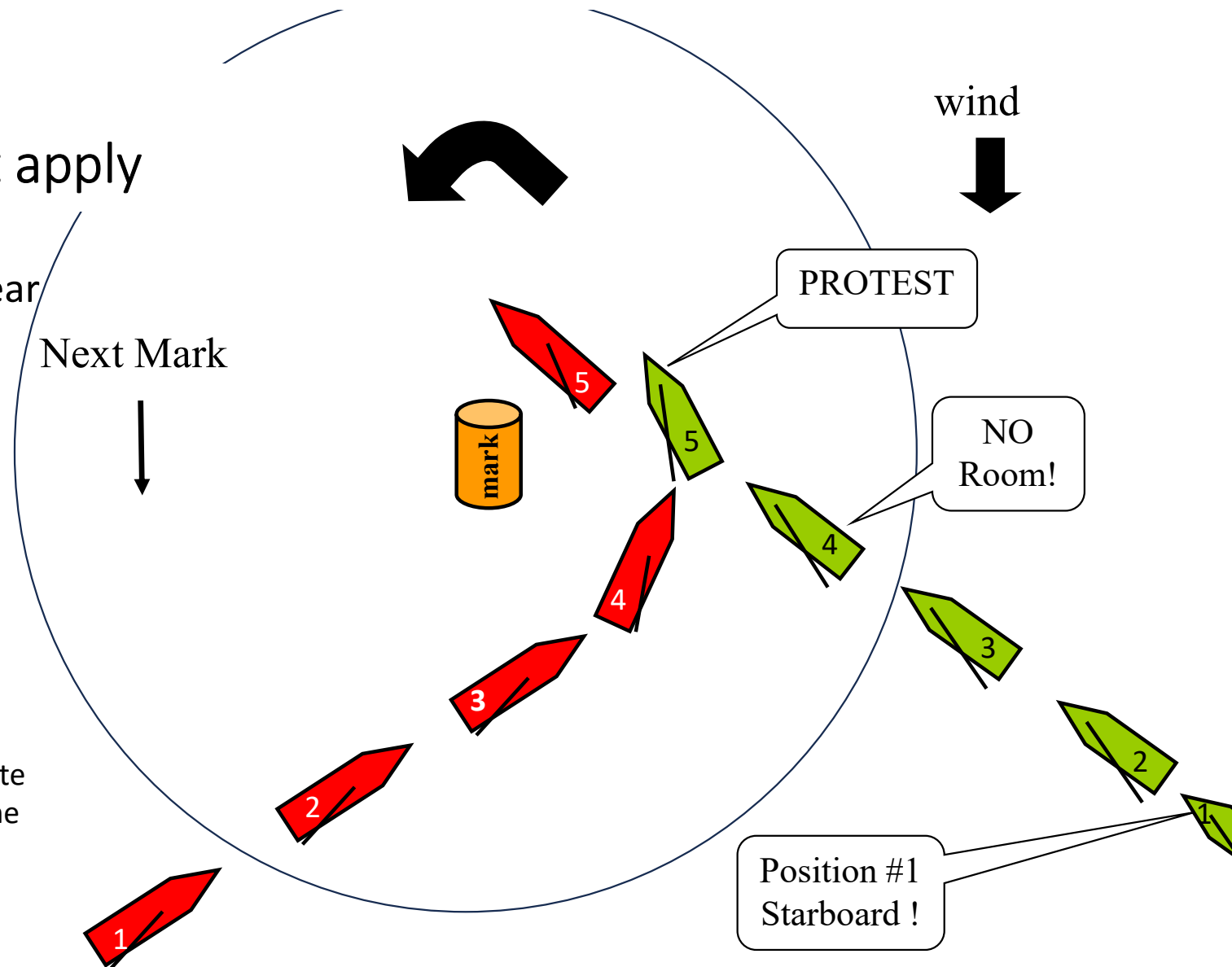
X Leeward and Windward

✓ Keep Clear

✓ Zone

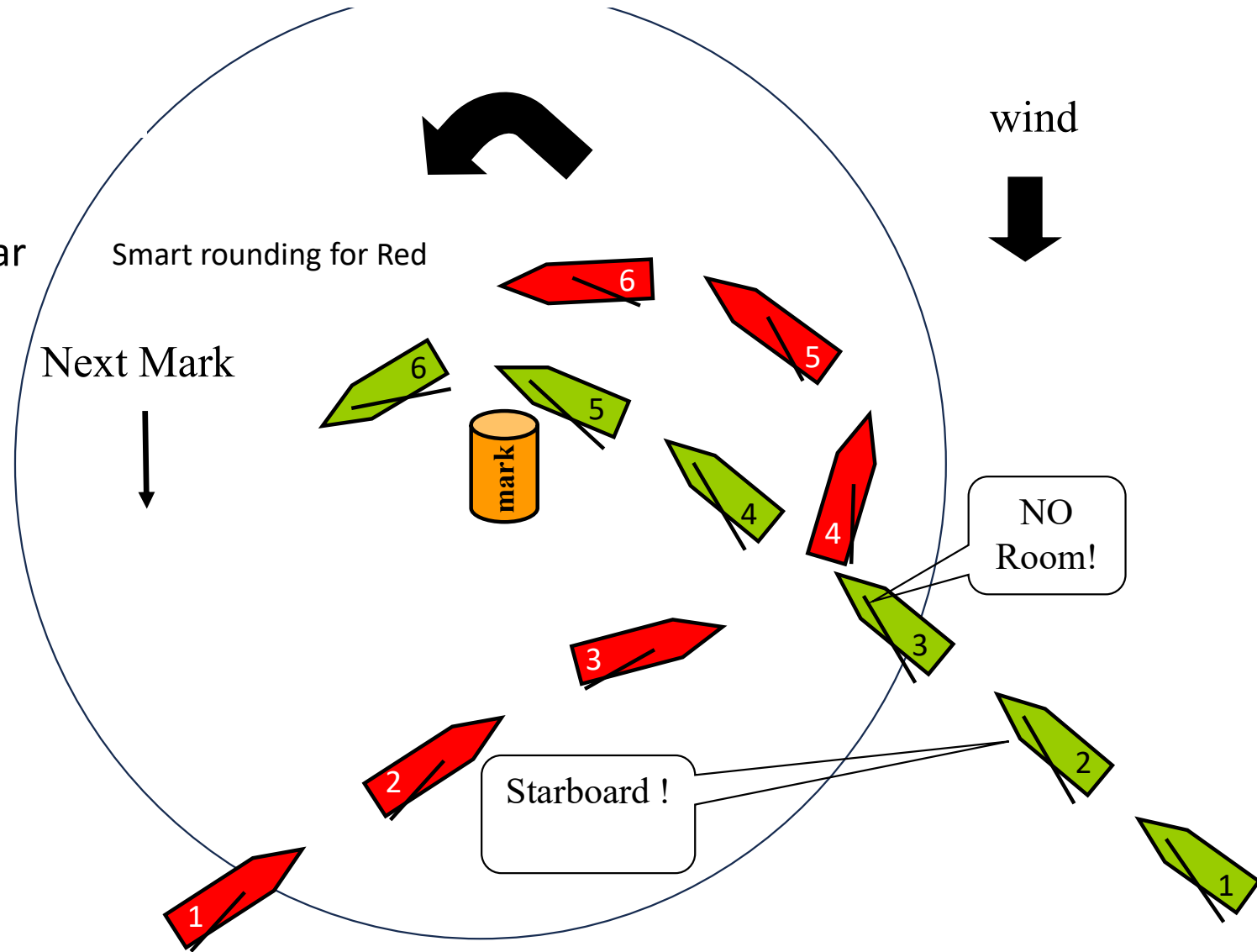
X Mark-Room

Even if Red was able to complete her *tack*, Green was *fetching* the *mark* as she entered the *zone*.
18.3 applies



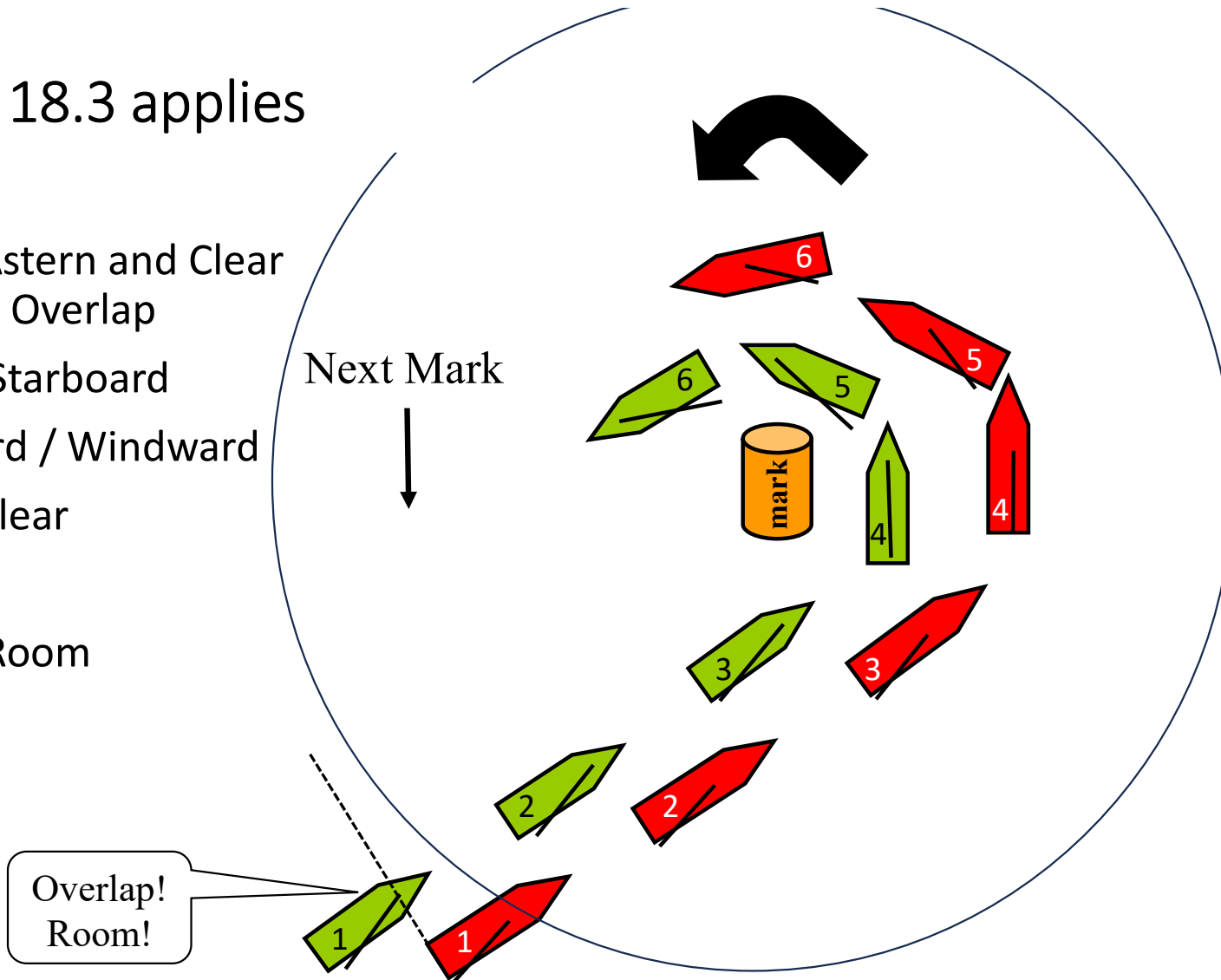
RRS - 18.3 applies

- X** Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap
- ✓ Port / Starboard
- X** Leeward and Windward
- ✓ Keep Clear
- ✓ Zone
- X** Mark-Room



RRS - 18.3 applies

- ✓ Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap
- ✗ Port / Starboard
- ✓ Leeward / Windward
- ✓ Keep Clear
- ✓ Zone
- ✓ Mark-Room



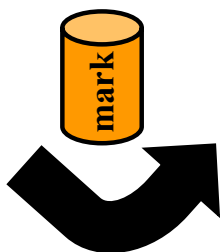
wind



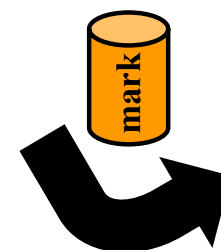
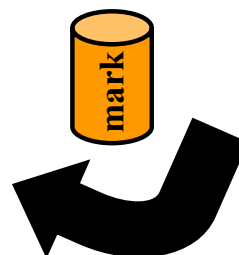
At position 4, vessels pass head to wind, RRS 18.1(a) does not apply however, *Leeward* vessel (Green) must sail her *proper course* to round the *mark* and provide room for Red to maneuver (RRS 16.1) RRS 18.2(1)(c) also applies. RRS 15 also applies.

RRS 18.4 Gybing in the Zone

When an inside overlapped right-of-way boat must gybe at a mark to sail her proper course, until she gybes she shall sail no farther from the mark than needed to sail that course. Rule 18.4 does not apply at a gate mark.



Normal *Port* Rounding Mark

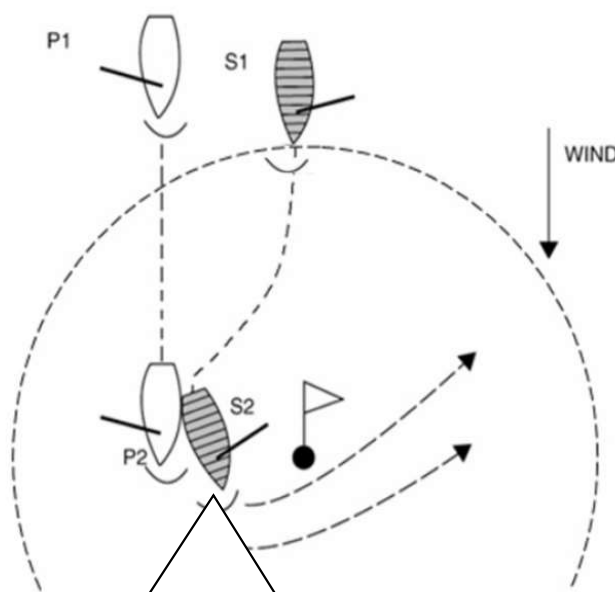


Gate Mark where a vessel may make the rounding to either *Port* or to *Starboard*

When rule 18 applies, the rules of Sections A and B apply as well. When an inside overlapped right-of-way boat must gybe at a mark she is entitled to sail her proper course until she gybes.

A starboard-tack boat that changes course does not break rule 16.1 if she gives a port-tack boat adequate space to keep clear and the port-tack boat fails to take advantage of it promptly.

RRS 10 applies
RRS 16.1 applies
RRS 18.2(a)(1) applies
RRS 18.4 applies



"S" shall not sail past the mark further than required to round in a Seamanlike manner

When in doubt – Give Mark Room

RRS 14 – Avoiding Collision

Where you have hailed “No Room” (not required however it is a good idea)

If you feel that the keep *clear vessel* had the ability and the opportunity to keep clear, follow the procedures to *protest*.

If you do not follow the procedures, the “*keep Clear*” vessel is not obliged to conduct penalty turns.

If you believe that you have “*fouled*” another vessel do the penalty turn(s) and are therefore you are exonerated for the breach of rule(s).

If the you wish to protest.

1. Hail *Protest* identifying the vessel. – (The vessel must be informed at the first opportunity)
(By identifying the vessel, it gives the vessel an opportunity to do their turn(s))
2. Conspicuously, display a red Flag.
3. “Complete the *protest* / Request for *Redress*” form found on the official Notice Board.
4. File the *protest* form within one hour of the RC docking (SCYC rule).
5. A *protest* hearing will be held and everybody will get an opportunity to discuss what happened. (Alternatively, where the NoR has enabled *arbitration*. The event can be discussed in private with the two skippers and one judge, prior to a *protest* hearing. Where *arbitration* fails to resolve the issue, the *protest* hearing will be held.)

ABOVE ALL, WHEN IN DOUBT, GIVE ROOM AND AVOID A COLLISION

End